

# the INSIDER

TOPIGS Canada Inc. | TOPIGS USA Inc. | Winter 2012

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## 2012 TOPIGS Canada Inc. Customer Appreciation Night



TOPIGS 26+ Club for 2012

On November 1, TOPIGS Canada Inc. held its Western Canada Customer Appreciation Night in Winnipeg, MB. The annual event which is highlighted by the Production Awards Ceremony began with a tasty pork dinner. With a record attendance at this year's Western Canadian banquet, Sales Manager John Sawatzky welcomed all the guests and commented, "It's great to see so many of our customers gathered here tonight to meet with fellow TOPIGS producers, TOPIGS staff, and members of our industry. TOPIGS is experiencing considerable growth in Canada and the USA. This is due to our very strong product lines and you, our valued customers."

After dinner, TOPIGS General Manager, Cam McGavin, addressed the banquet guests. Expressing his appreciation to all TOPIGS customers, Cam talked about some of the ongoing investments TOPIGS is making into genomics as well as many research and development projects. "In today's world, TOPIGS is unwavering in its commitment to making better and more efficient products for the benefit of our customers," stated McGavin.

Awards were presented to the winners and runners up for the best numbers in various production categories. Participation in the awards competition is optional for customers, and the results come from one year performance monitors from herds using TOPIGS genetics. This year's data from participants included more than 52,000 sows from

Canada and Montana with herd sizes averaging over 1,200 sows per farm. Top producing TOPIGS customer herds are now achieving more than 30 pigs weaned / mated female / year, more than 14 pigs born alive / litter and weaning over 12 pigs / litter. The average production numbers of the total sows entered were: 88.5% farrowing rate; 12.96 pigs born alive / litter; and 27.4 pigs weaned / mated female / year.

Here is the summary of the 2012 production award winners and runners-up listed by category.

### Herds of 500 Sows or Less Category:

#### *Farrowing Rate*

Winner with 96.0% - VDK Farms of Three Hills, AB

Runner-up with 94.8% - Albion Ridge Colony of Picture Butte, AB

#### *Born Alive*

Winner with 13.72 - Miami Colony of New Dayton, AB

Runner-up with 13.59 - Arnold van Ginkel of Leslie, AB

#### *Pigs Weaned / Mated Female / Year*

Winner with 30.10 - Keho Lake Colony of Barons, AB

Runner-up with 29.63 - Albion Ridge Colony of Picture Butte, AB

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Blue Ribbon - 92.9% Farrowing Rate



Blumengart Colony - 28.98 Weaned per Sow per Year



Bon Homme Colony - 92.9% Farrowing Rate



Guests from Alberta to Manitoba Attended



Silver Pine 2 - 13.3 Pigs Born Alive per Litter



Sunnybrook 1 - 13.3 Pigs Born Alive per Litter

#### Herds of 501 – 1,200 Sows Category:

##### Farrowing Rate

Winner with 95.8% - Garden Plane Colony of Frontier, SK  
Runner-up with 92.9% - Bon Homme Colony of Elie, MB

##### Born Alive

Winner with 14.00 – Mystique Pork of Stephenfield, MB  
Runner-up with 13.50 – Greyland Pork of Fannystelle, MB

#### Pigs Weaned / Mated Female / Year

Winner (tie) with 29.10 - Mystique Pork of Stephenfield, MB  
Winner (tie) with 29.10 – Greyland Pork of Fannystelle, MB  
Runner-up with 28.98 – Blumengart Colony of Plum Coulee, MB

#### Herds of 1,200 Sows or More Category:

##### Farrowing Rate

Winner with 92.9% - Blue Ribbon Swine of Grunthal, MB  
Runner-up with 92.8% - Quinfield Farms of Lowe Farm, MB



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## Schothorst Feed Research and TOPIGS Join Forces



### Schothorst Feed Research

research and further focuses on the interaction between nutrition and genetics. The opening of the new pig facility marks the last stage of a 9 million euro investment program by SFR.

The facilities of Schothorst will house 350 sows and 3000 growing/finishing pigs and enables both TOPIGS and SFR to perform experiments on a practical scale. Furthermore, 40 Insentec feeder stations are installed that enable individual performance and feed intake measurements for 480 animals. A separate metabolic unit is established for fundamental, challenge, balance and digestibility experiments. These types of studies are the basis for the SFR feedstuff tables and nutrient requirements.

Schothorst Feed Research (SFR) has officially opened their new research facilities for pigs and sows. In the new facilities TOPIGS will test different sow and boar lines of TOPIGS. This cooperation will expand current nutritional

"We are excited about the possibilities that the cooperation with TOPIGS offers," states Dr. Piet van der Aar, Research Director of SFR. "Our international activities require that we have more expertise about nutritional requirements of different genetic lines and conditions. We will be better able to advise our customers worldwide based on our own research."

Electronic data collection is utilized as much as possible in order to minimize human errors. Data of individual animals with different genetic background will be used by TOPIGS for analyses of their selection and evaluation programs. The primary purpose for TOPIGS is to evaluate various highly productive genetic lines under practical conditions.

Schothorst Feed Research is an independent private research organization which advises feed manufacturers worldwide. Feed producers in 16 countries, representing approximately 7% of the global feed production, are using the SFR feedstuff table, nutrient recommendations, and expertise in formulating their feeds and feeding programs.

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### Born Alive

Winner with 13.50 - Quinfield Farms of Lowe Farm, MB  
 Runner-up (tie) with 13.30 - Blue Ribbon Swine of Grunthal, MB  
 Runner-up (tie) with 13.30 - Silver Pine Swine 2 of New Bothwell, MB  
 Runner-up (tie) with 13.30 - Sunnybrook Swine Site 1 of Ste. Agathe, MB

### Pigs Weaned / Mated Female / Year

Winner with 29.50 - The Dutch Barn of Cardale, MB  
 Runner-up with 29.30 - Quinfield Farms of Lowe Farm, MB

At this year's banquet, a record number of award plaques were handed out to the winners of the TOPIGS 26+ Club award. This year the 26+ Club Award was presented to 43 farms! This award is presented to the herds producing greater than 26.0 pigs weaned / mated female / year. The average result from the winners in this year's 26+ Club was 27.8 pigs weaned / mated female / year. The award recognizes the hard work of customers in attaining these numbers and demonstrates the genetic potential of TOPIGS breeding stock.

Hillcrest Colony from Power, Montana took the award for Best New Start-Up Herd. This award is presented to a new herd of any size that has not yet reached an average parity herd and was recently populated with TOPIGS females. (Please read more about Hillcrest Colony in this issue's "Producer PROfile.")

Thank you to all who attended and helped make the evening a great success! We look forward to more great results in 2013.

## TOPIGS Signs Breed4Food Initiative

On September 3, 2012, TOPIGS signed a memorandum of understanding to take part in Breed4Food. Breed4Food is a collaboration between four Dutch breeding companies and the Animal Breeding and Genomics Centre of Wageningen University and Research Center. The four international companies are all among the world leaders in their areas of breeding, including beef cattle, poultry and pigs.



The primary goal of Breed4Food is to build a top research and innovation institute in livestock genetics. The research program will focus on three points of excellence:

- Exploiting DNA information
- Enabling new breeding goal traits
- Creating added value in the food chain

Innovations in these fields are crucial in order to be able to satisfy the globally increasing demand for high quality animal proteins. Sophisticated breeding programs need to be implemented in order to increase the efficiency of the food chain, to reduce the ecological footprint, to respond to changing consumer wishes and to contribute to the improved welfare of humans and animals.

"The combination of companies and their knowledge is essential to be able to achieve the ambitions of the Dutch agrifood sector," explains Ate Lindeboom, chairman of Breed4Food. "This way, we can make a joint contribution to the creation of added value in the production of milk, meat, and eggs."



## TOPIGS Producer PROfile – Hillcrest Colony

Historically the production of hogs in North America has been a key component of many farms and, for many years, hogs were known as the “mortgage lifters.” This applies to the many Hutterite communities throughout the western Canadian Prairies and the mid-western United States. When a new colony was to be established, often the first buildings to be constructed were sow barns. While many farms today do not raise hogs, approximately 75% of the more than 480 Hutterite colonies have some form of hog production.

In 2008, Springdale Colony in Montana established a new colony and decided that hog production would be part of this new colony as it had been for Springdale. Hillcrest Colony was established just north of Great Falls, Montana. Many factors needed to be considered before constructing any hog production facilities. Markets for finished hogs in Montana do not exist and the nearest major packing plant is a 600 mile journey. Economies of scale and availability of grain also played an important role in the decision as to what type of production facility needed to be built. After discussion with many industry people, and considering their own land base, human resources and markets, the decision was made to build a 2,500 farrow-wean sow unit.

Producing large numbers of high health and high quality weaners requires the right genetics as well as the right management system and staff. After careful consideration regarding which breeding company to choose, TOPIGS proved to be the best choice. Having recently switched the breeding stock at Springdale to TOPIGS from another breeding company, the Hillcrest decision appeared to be the right one. A weaner contract was secured and the plan was put into action.

Midwest Livestock Systems Inc. was contracted to build the 2,500 sow unit using group sow housing, and construction began in July 2010. The barn was completed on schedule, and the stocking of TOPIGS 20 gilts and Tempo boars began in early November 2010.

Several members of the Hillcrest production team were rookies to hog production, however, they have never looked back. The goal was to produce a minimum of 1,200 weaners per week which would equate to 25 pigs sold per sow per year. Under the management of this young team, productivity exceeded their expectations. Even with some commercial F2 gilts in the start-up they weaned almost 28 pigs / sow / year.

The Hillcrest production unit operates on a very tight and regular schedule. Every team member has his duties and every day has its scheduled tasks. All sows are naturally mated with boars, no AI is used. Sows are grouped in large pens soon after mating with 120 sows



High Quality Piglets begin with High Performing Sows



Hillcrest Sows in Group Housing

in each group. Each sow is tagged with a transponder ear tag and has access to two Big Dutchmen Electronic Sow Feeders. Diets and feeding curves are carefully planned and adjusted to meet the needs of each individual sow. Sows are moved into the farrowing rooms 2-3 days before their due date. Weaning takes place when the piglets are 22-23 days of age.

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## TOPIGS Canada Inc. Announces New Business Development Representative



TOPIGS Canada announced today that Art Friesen has joined its staff as Business Development Representative. Art is based in Lethbridge, Alberta. In his new role, Art will develop sales and provide customer support in Alberta and Montana, and this key appointment enhances the TOPIGS Canada Sales and Service team.

Well known to many producers, Art is very familiar with the Alberta and Montana swine industry. He also brings with him years of experience in sales and key management positions held with a large feed company in Manitoba and Alberta.

"We are excited to have Art join us at TOPIGS. His extensive knowledge of swine production and related industries will bring great value to the TOPIGS team," said John Sawatzky, Sales Manager at TOPIGS.

Art looks forward to being part of the progressive attitude and excitement that is a TOPIGS trademark as he moves into his new role. He may be reached by calling (403) 382-9741 or email at: [afriesen@topigs.ca](mailto:afriesen@topigs.ca)

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In the start-up year of production the TOPIGS 20 gilts performed extremely well. With a 12.59 average born alive / litter and weaning 11.3 pigs / litter on 2.49 litters / sow / year the start-up numbers began at 28.14 pigs weaned / sow / year. The performance of the F2 gilts reduced their overall herd performance average to 26.76 pigs weaned / sow / year. From day one, the plan was always to farrow the F2 gilts once or twice and then roll them out to be replaced with TOPIGS 20 gilts.

Currently only 10% of the herd are F2s and the performance continues to climb. Today the born alive per litter is at 13.5, with an average of 11.5 pigs weaned / litter. The sow herd has climbed to 29.5 pigs weaned / mated female / year. Jason states, "The TOPIGS sows are easy to manage and wean large litters of big healthy piglets. Our weaner buyer is very happy with our pigs and we have recently signed a long term agreement with our buyer."

Recently at the TOPIGS Canada awards ceremony Hillcrest was presented with the award for the "Best Start-up Herd." The numbers reflect their achievements in this large herd. For the year ending June 30, 2012, their herd had an average born alive of 12.82 and 27.78 pigs weaned / mated female / year.



High Quality Tempo Sired Weaners Moving to the Mid-west

With the current high price of grain, the Hillcrest decision to produce weaner pigs seems to be the correct one. A large volume of quality weaners commands a good price along with a demand. The Hillcrest team has proven they can produce the product and volumes required for their customer.





## TOPIGS AI Stations

TOPIGS terminal and maternal line boar semen is available throughout North America. Please contact TOPIGS or one of the suppliers listed below.

### TOPIGS USA Boar Studs

#### AiPARTNERS

Morris, MN  
Contact: Bruce Zierke  
Lab/Office: (320) 760-3504  
Email: bzierke@zierkecompany.com

#### DUTCH SIREs

New Carlisle, OH  
Contact: Gene Isler  
Lab/Office: 937-846-1528  
Email: piggene@aol.com

### TOPIGS Canada Boar Studs

#### Magnum Swine Genetics Inc.

Fort Macleod, Alberta  
Contact: Andrew Buesekom  
Lab/Office: (888) 553-4844  
Email: andrew@magnumswine.com

#### Ontario Swine Improvement Inc.

Innerkip, Ontario  
Contact: Marlow Gingerich  
Lab/Office: (800) 493-2627  
Email: mgingerich@osi.org

#### Alberta Swine Genetics Corporation

Nisku, Alberta  
Contact: Gregory Leboa  
Lab/Office: (800) 691-3060  
Email: gregasgc@gmail.com

#### Total Swine Genetics Inc.

Tillsonburg, Ontario  
Contact: Stuart De Vries  
Lab/Office: (800) 844-9913  
Email: sdevries\_shadeoak@sympatico.ca

#### Carlo Genetics Inc.

Ste. Anne, Manitoba  
Contact: George Goossen  
Lab/Office: (204) 355-4012  
Email: georgegoossen@carlogenetics.com

#### C & M Genetics

Lucan, Ontario  
Contact: Dr. Corneliu Oltean  
Lab/Office: (888) 259-7594  
Email: corneliu-oltean@cmgenetics.com



## HOW TO PLAY

Please answer the questions in our Insider Quiz. All the answers are in this newsletter. Then fax, mail or email your answers, along with your name, address, and phone number. Entries to be received by January 31, 2013. Winners will receive a \$20 WalMart gift certificate. If you wish, the TOPIGS rep in your area will deliver the prize. Employees of TOPIGS and their subsidiaries are not eligible.

Please contact us for more information:

John Sawatzky, Sales Manager  
(204) 981-0243

Gord Edwards, Ontario Sales Manager  
(519) 440-8128

Rick Beunen, Ontario Business Development  
(519) 317-7403

Ron Musick, Manitoba Business Development  
(204) 223-3193

Sergio Sosa, Manitoba & Saskatchewan Business Development  
(204) 792-0776

Art Friesen, Alberta & Montana Business Development  
(403) 382-9741

Craig Jarolimek, USA Business Development  
(701) 866-4444

Brent Eyler, Eastern USA Business Development  
(937) 733-8532

## TOPIGS INSIDER Quiz

How many sows will be housed at the Schothorst Feed Research facility?

What is the current pigs weaned / mated female / year at Hillcrest Colony?

What was the born alive per litter for the award received by Mystique Pork?

How many sows are housed in each group after mating at Hillcrest Colony?

Name:

Farm Name:

Address:

Phone #:

Email:

### TOPIGS INSIDER Quiz Winners

Here are the winners from last issue: Danny Kleinsasser, Springfield Colony, MB; Jordan Maendel, Sturgeon Creek Colony, MB; Dave Entz, Starbrite Farms, AB; Schotman Farms, ON; Joe Wiipf, Vanguard Colony, SK; Edward Waldner, Rosedale Colony, AB; Justin Stahl, Bon Homme Colony, MB; Joe Wurz, Keho Lake Colony, AB; Joram Waldner, Cool Spring Colony, MB; Clifford Maendel, Rosebank Colony, MB

Each winner receives a TOPIGS gift or boar statue. The TOPIGS rep in your area will deliver your prize. Congratulations!

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